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ABSTRACT

This study examined an international educational partnership between Florida International University and Taiwan's Fu-Hsing school that emphasized curriculum and instructional change to improve educational quality in Taiwan. Collaborators from the institutions developed criteria for teaching effectiveness and established an evaluation system for Fu-Hsing teachers. Items were selected from two U.S. teacher appraisal instruments to create a teacher evaluation scale for the Fu-Hsing school. To determine which criteria were appropriate for Fu-Hsing, a seminar was held for Fu-Hsing teachers with courses on content knowledge, planning skills, selection and use of appropriate materials, classroom management, instructional skills, and human relations skills. Each section included lecture, demonstration, and practice of new skills. Seminar participants were surveyed regarding their level of acceptance of the criteria. The same criteria were presented at three conferences for university professors, principals, research fellows, teachers, and educational administrators. A final list of criteria was produced following the conferences translated into English, and given to a Fu-Hsing English teacher for modifications. The final instrument was presented to principals of Taipei City to introduce them to teacher evaluation systems and observation methods. Results indicated that this appraisal system was useful in improving the quality of Fu-Hsing teachers' performance. (Contains 10 references.) (SM)

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International Collaborative Development:
Curriculum and Instructional Change
in Taiwan

Objectives:

In Taiwan, there is currently no model for international university/school collaborative development. University/school collaborative development can serve as a strategy to refine the quality of education (Stallings & Kowalski, 1990; McIntyre, 1994). The purpose of this research was to discuss an international educational partnership between Florida International University in the U.S.A. and Fu-Hsing school in Taiwan on curriculum and instructional change in order to give suggestions to the Ministry of Education in Taiwan and the Educational Bureau of Taipei city to improve the quality of education in Taiwan.

Theoretical Framework:

Canning (1990) articulated six stages to develop an educational partnership between school and university. These are searching, doing, sharing, clarifying, and renewing. From the past experience, school/university first worked for a goal that can improve the quality of education in school. They worked out a plan together. During the process, school/university shared the experience, communicated the ideas. They will revise the plan if they find it is necessary. School will carry out the plan under the guidance of the University. Starting in 1994, Dr. Judith Slater, professor of FIU in the U.S.A., and Dr. Phoebe Lee, principal of Fu-Hsing school in Taipei, began to define a meaningful interaction that could refine the quality of teaching in Fu-Hsing in order to change the curriculum and instructional development in the school. Modern educational theory advocates that effective teaching will only result if, among other things, there is an effective system in place for the supervision of teacher performance (Beach & Reinhartz, 1989, Chang, 1994). An appraisal

of teaching performance could serve to enhance teacher effectiveness in Taiwan (Lee, 1999). Dr. Slater and Dr. Lee began to develop criteria for teaching effectiveness and set up an evaluation system for teachers in Fu-Hsing. Selke (1996) noted that school/university collaborative depends on the communication between participants. In this project, the school/university worked together to set up the goals, define the solution of the problems, use technology methods to increase the understanding of each party and respect the professional suggestions to solve problems of staff development for the school.

Data Source/Methodology and/Techniques:

Building upon the principles of document analysis, two statewide teacher appraisal instruments, the Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS) and the Florida Performance Measurement System (FPMS), were selected by Dr. Slater and Dr. Lee as models of staff evaluation because they are systematic, formal and continuous in process. Items were selected from TTAS and FPMS based on their applicability to teacher performance in Fu-Hsing school in Taiwan. Expert teachers for each subject at Fu-Hsing were consulted. For each criterion the full listing of behaviors in TTAS and FPMS, were identified by Dr. Slater and Dr. Lee. They did a preliminary pilot study at Fu-Hsing Middle School and observed an English teacher to determine if the criterion could be adapted.

In order to find out which criteria were appropriate for Fu-Hsing, Dr. Lee held a seminar for Fu-Hsing teachers in Taipei City. There were implemented In-service training courses for teachers. The topics included: knowledge of content, planning skills, selection and use of appropriate materials, classroom management, instructional skills and human relations skills. In the instructional skill courses, topics including cooperative learning, small group techniques, and questioning skills were discussed. Each section consisted of lecture, demonstration, and opportunities to practice the skills learned. After the training courses, a survey was given to find out the participants' level of

acceptance of the criteria within the environment of Fu-Hsing. The same list of criteria was again presented at three conferences. The participants were professors from the normal university, principals of public and private school, the Minister of Taipei City Bureau of Education, research fellows from Academia Sinica, the superintendent of the school district, teachers, and administrators. They recommended minor changes about the order of the criterion. During the second conference, they took a long time to discuss the translation of the criterion into Chinese. The final list was then translated into English.

Results:

Criteria were established to create an observation instrument appropriate for use in Fu-Hsing school. Items in the instrument were based on two established, valid and reliable instruments used in the United States. The model was piloted at Fu Hsing Elementary and Middle School in Taipei. There are more than 199 teachers/staff and 3046 students in the Fu Hsing Elementary and Middle School. The school established an English Research and Development Center in 1992 and developed new curriculum for both the elementary and middle school. The school employs foreign teachers to help teach English conversation and to give students more chances to practice what they have learned. The researcher selected one English teacher from the English department for a trial implementation of a teacher appraisal instrument. The English teacher had five years teaching experience and volunteered for the pilot of the appraisal instrument. The English teacher participated in eight in-service training courses given by Dr. Slater and Dr. Lee. These training courses were open to other principals, teachers and administrators in Taipei City.

The next phase was to use the criteria to evaluate English teachers, create vehicles for teacher improvement based on the data compiled, and to inform and train professionals in its use. The first step toward this was a trial implementation of the resultant instrument with a teacher at Fu-Hsing who

participated in the in-service training. This English teacher was selected because the instrument could be utilized by Dr. Slater who could use the instrument in English.

In summary, criteria for the teacher performance as determined through ratings by teachers and suggestions from the participants of three conferences held with stakeholders to create an evaluation observation instrument appropriate for use in Fu-Hsing. Items in the instrument were based on the Texas Teacher Appraisal System and Florida Performance Measurement System, valid and reliable instruments used in the United States. The participants of the conferences all agreed that the items were appropriate for use in Fu-Hsing. Dr. Slater and Dr. Lee examined the format of the Teacher Appraisal System Observation Record and suggested modifications and established a process protocol for administration, then used the instrument to evaluate a teacher at Fu-Hsing Middle School who had participated in in-service training on the elements of effective teaching.

An evaluation instrument was identified and modified through the systematic use of participant stakeholders at seminars and conferences on effective teaching. Criterion of teacher effectiveness were identified and modified in the development of the model of teacher evaluation for Fu-Hsing teachers. To ensure the reliability and validity of the instrument, Dr. Slater used the instrument in a trial evaluation of an English teacher in Fu-Hsing and the results were compared to Dr. Lee for reliability. The instrument was further modified, based on implementation recommendations and presented by Dr. Slater and Dr. Lee to the principals of Taipei City to introduce them to teacher evaluation systems and teacher observation methods. This study found that teacher performance appraisal system can be used for teachers in Fu-Hsing in order to improve the quality of teacher performance.

Dr. Slater and Dr. Lee continuously designed and modified the training for the observer of the teacher performance appraisal instrument. They worked together to renew all the courses which included: knowledge of content,

planning skill, selection and use of appropriate materials, writing the objectives, classroom management, instructional skills and human relations skills. In the instructional skill courses, topics including cooperative learning, small group techniques, multiple intelligence and questioning skills. Each section consisted of lecture, demonstration, observation skills and opportunities to practice the skills learned. 17 teachers of Fu-Hsing school from each subject passed the observation examination and were awarded a certificate to be certified observers authorized by the city government.

Furthermore, Dr. Slater and Dr. Lee continued to carry on the experiment with the English department for three years. Teaching performance in the English Department has undergone a great change. Teachers set up the basic ability and skills for each level of schooling, designed a proper curriculum for students, created new activities for students to participate, used new teaching strategies such as cooperative teaching skills and multiple intelligence theory to enrich the content of learning. Teachers truly used English to teach English. Before, mostly they used Chinese to teach English. As the result, the ability of students' listening and speaking has greatly improvement. The average score on the entrance exam for high school was raised 10 points compared to past performance. Other subject teachers started to tape their teaching performance during the class and use the evaluation sheet to find out the weaknesses of their teaching and tried to change their teaching behavior. They also started to have teaching demonstration for other subject teachers to observe.

This is a unique advancement over the informal and non-standardized teacher evaluation used up until then. Previously, teacher performance was informal and not clearly aimed toward improvement of teacher practice. The introduction of this system provided the seed for the growth in the future of a formal method of evaluation of teacher performance. Now, it also serves as a model for teacher evaluation throughout Taiwan.

Because no system of evaluation existed in Taiwan, it was necessary and

suitable to propose effective teaching criteria and an evaluation system in order to facilitate teacher development, improve instructional quality, and to identify the weak areas so that appropriate action can be taken to promote teachers improvement. International school/university collaborative development caused great change in curriculum and instruction in Fu-Hsing school.

The international school/university collaborative research produced a teacher performance appraisal system based on researched criteria of teacher effectiveness. An Observation Record form was developed and refined by Dr. Slater and Dr. Lee and a final instrument both in English and Chinese is now available for use in Taiwan. Dr. Lee and Dr. Slater now started to train teacher/administrators to be expert evaluators. The Taipei City Bureau of Education and Kao-Shung Educational City Bureau have moved toward adoption of the instrument as a teacher appraisal system for teachers in Taiwan.

This is a good experience of international school/university collaboration happening between the U.S.A. and Taiwan. Fu-Hsing school has become well-known for its achievement in curriculum and instructional development throughout Taiwan.

From past experience, we learned that university provided the theoretical, professional resources to help the school develop a good learning environment to assist teachers to teach better. If the school/university educational partnership continuously developed in good communication, it will no longer be (high, hard land) and (swampy, low land) as Schon (1987) described. School/university educational partnerships benefit both sides.

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